

GE Rome
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Date of Record: 9/18/02

Date Segregated From File: 12/12/02

File Break: _____

Type of Document (e.g., form, memo, letter, report, etc.): Memorandum

From: William A. Melville

To: James Kutzman

Re: General Electric Site - Preliminary Assessment of
Rome, GA PCB Contamination in the COOSA
River in GA and Alabama

Comments (Include Redaction of Documents): _____

File Reviewed By: JMS

Date: 12/12/02

Determination Re-evaluated By: JMS

Date: 12/12/02

It has been determined that this record, or a portion thereof, must be withheld because it has been determined to be exempt from mandatory disclosure by virtue of 5 U.S.C. 552(b).^{*} Mark the exemption or exemptions that apply:

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^{*}Exemptions 5 and portions of Exemption 7 (i.e., (b)(7)(A) & (b)(7)(C)) are discretionary exemptions and require review of designated records for release determination each time documents are requested.

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Agency Freedom of Information Officer (1105)
United States Environmental Protection Agency
401 M Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

RE: _____ - RIN - _____

(EPA Request Identification Number Assigned to FOIA Request)

SITE: GE ROME
BREAK: 1.2
OTHER:

William Melville
09/18/02 09:51 AM

To: Carolyn Thompson/R4/USEPA/US@EPA, Jim
Kutzman/R4/USEPA/US@EPA

cc:
Subject: Memeo on PCBs in Alabama waters



GEdatamemo.wq

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MEMORANDUM

Subj: Preliminary assessment of PCB contamination in the Coosa River in Georgia and Alabama

From: William A. Melville
Chief, TMDL Modeling and Support Section

To: James Kutzman
Deputy Director, Waste Management Division

On September 11, 2002, Carolyn Thompson requested our assistance in compiling and evaluating data related to the extent of PCB contamination in the Coosa River, especially the impacts on the Alabama reservoirs. We were able to compile historical water quality data entered into the EPA data base STORET and fish tissue data from Georgia and Alabama for our assessment. The data available is suitable for making a qualitative assessment of PCB fate and transport in the Coosa River since the late 1970's to the present. A summary of our interpretations of the data are presented below.

Current Conditions

At the Georgia -Alabama state line, the measured PCBs, by congener, in the Coosa River, were last entered into STORET in the early 1990's. These samples contained PCB concentrations well above the human health criteria designed to protect consumers of fresh water fish. The mean concentrations for several PCB congeners ranged from 0.3 -0.8 ppb as compared to 0.017 ppb for total PCBs at the 10⁻⁴ cancer risk level.

This continuing source of PCBs contributes to the existing elevated levels of PCBs found in Lakes Weiss, Neely Henry and Logan Martin. Channel catfish and large mouth bass are the principal fish tested and the most recent sampling results are summarized below.

LAKE	Channel Catfish	Large Mouth Bass
Weiss	0.3- 2.0 (1990-94)	0.1 - 1.0 (2000)
Neely Henry	0.2 -3.8 (2001)	0.1 - 0.6 (2001)
Logan Martin (just upstream)	0.2 - .5 (1998)	0.2 - 1.0 (1998)

The fish tissue values can be compared to the recommended EPA health risk fish tissue advisory levels based upon a 10^{-5} cancer risk level as presented below.

For a 70kg adult consuming one 8 ounce meal per week the fish tissue concentration is set at 0.006 mg/kg; for one meal per month 0.023 mg/kg, and the do not consume level is 0.094 mg/kg.

Georgia uses a 10^{-4} risk level to set fish advisories for PCBs and Alabama uses the FDA 2 mg/kg fish tissue level. Currently Weiss is listed for limited consumption of Catfish and Neely Henry is posted for do not consume catfish in the Croft Ferry area.

Historical Data

In the late 1970's , Alabama documented a sediment sample at the state line containing 65 mg/kg of PCBs. Individual catfish had tissue concentrations above 50 mg/kg. There is a clear trend of decreasing fish tissue concentrations in Lake Weiss in the 1980's and there is insufficient data to indicate if the trend is still decreasing or if the levels are stabilizing.

About 8-10 years after the peak concentrations impacted Lake Weiss, PCBs peaked in downstream Lake Neely Henry and they appear to be on a downward trend as well.

These Lakes are controlled for power generation and these dams are designed to enable sediment transport to avoid excessive build up behind the dams. It is apparent that contaminated sediment is slowly migrating through the Coosa River system in Alabama.